

**Marine Endangered Species Monitoring Program Summary
FY06 Maintenance Dredging, 30 through 40-Foot Project
Jacksonville Harbor
Duval County, Florida
W912EP-06-C-0012**



**US Army Corps of Engineers
B+B Dredging**

01 July 2006 – 10 August 2006

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ABSTRACT

*A twenty-four-hour-per-day endangered species monitoring program was conducted onboard the hopper dredge Columbia from 01 July 2006 through 10 August 2006 during routine channel maintenance dredging in the Terminal Channel in Jacksonville, FL. Endangered and threatened species targeted include the Florida Manatee (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*), Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), Kemp's Ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), Green (*Chelonia mydas*), and Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) sea turtles. Observer monitoring (ESO) was provided by East Coast Observers, Inc. (ECO, inc.) and was at 100%, using two observers approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). This project was awarded by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE – Jacksonville District), and contracted through B+B Dredging Company.*

INTRODUCTION

Endangered species observers conducted twenty four hour monitoring aboard the hopper dredge Columbia for Jacksonville Harbor maintenance dredging project in Jacksonville, FL. Pursuant to agreements with NMFS, two certified observers were required to work onboard the dredge in 12 hour shifts allowing coverage 24 hours per day. As this channel is critical to deep draft vessels, and is deemed a high traffic area, routine maintenance is necessary for proper channel depth. This channel is most used by vessels that are a part of the area's economic and tourism industry. As this project was assigned during a period of the year where it is still possible to encounter turtles and manatee due to geographic location, it was critical to maintain species monitoring aboard the dredge. During project duration, observation of two manatees and one Loggerhead turtle were noted. All sightings occurred prior to actual dredging while the dredge was on standby. The manatee was witnessed by observers and dredging/safety/corps personnel near the pump out station while no activity was being conducted. A Loggerhead sighting was also observed at stand-by and witnessed by the ESO on duty prior to dredging activity commencement. It was seen at the pump off station. No sightings were observed during dredging project.

SCOPE OF WORK

East Coast Observers, Inc. was subcontracted by B+B Dredging to conduct onboard endangered species monitoring. ECO, inc. was to provide necessary trained personnel and relevant equipment to inspect, clean and monitor inflow screening located onboard the Dredge Columbia. Observers were also required to monitor the draghead and draghead deflector each time they were brought onboard for cleaning and maintenance, and complete load data sheets for each subsequent load. Any death or injury to endangered species was to be identified, measured, photographed and logged. Proper disposal of said species was to be performed by the observer and dredge personnel. Load sheets were to be completed for each individual load, and included pertinent information to each load. Load time start, load time stop, condition of screening and draghead deflector, type of dredged material, weather and sea conditions, screen contents and

species bycatch. Any take information was to be noted on the load data sheet, and then detailed in a separate incident report. Daily and weekly summary forms were to be completed and given to dredge and USACE personnel. Day and night bridge watches were assigned to observers when not occupied with screen and draghead inspection duties.

Dredging commenced on 01 July 2006 and ran until its completion on 10 August 2006. Dredging was completed with no incidents or takes, and by-catch was recorded upon inspection of each individual load as normal.

RESULTS

Project Date: 01 July 2006 – 10 August 2006

Project Length: 41 days

Coverage Level: 100% onboard dredge

Total Number of Takes: 0

Number of Loads: 148

Water Temperature: 81° - 83° Fahrenheit

DISCUSSION

No takes involving endangered species were recorded on this project. Water temperature for the duration of the channel maintenance indicated that turtles could be present in the area.

BY-CATCH LISTING

Astroscopus y-graecum

Busycon contrarium

Callinectes sapidus

Limulus polyphemus

Mola mola

Pagurus pollicaris

Paralichthys dentatus

Raja eglanteria

Southern Stargazer Fish

Lightning Whelk (and eggs)

Blue Crab

Horseshoe Crab

Sunfish

Flat Clawed Hermit Crab

Summer Flounder

Clear Nosed Skate (and eggs)

(MISC.)

Unidentified shark

Various marine vegetation

Various trash and debris collected and disposed of at dump site